

## Keep Members Interested

It is easy to attract new members in times of crisis. Hot button issues energize the neighborhood, particularly if residents feel their property values or quality of life is threatened. However, after the publicity dies away and the problem is resolved, active members may disappear. It is considerably more difficult to sustain interest during mundane times.

Keeping the interest and involvement of association members is an ongoing challenge in every neighborhood. Here are some pointers and ideas that hopefully will stimulate your thinking.

Here are some helpful hints to maintaining interest:

- ***Be realistic in your expectations of the members.*** Many neighbors have other priorities that may limit participation.
- ***Stay focused on a few well-defined goals or projects.***
- ***Regularly check that meeting times, locations and meeting lengths are convenient for members.***
- ***Celebrate each success.***
- ***Ask individual neighbors for help or their involvement.*** Sometimes a personal invitation to help is most effective. A person may be willing if asked, but may not volunteer or speak up in a group setting.
- ***Find out what is important to your members*** and get them involved in committees or projects involving their interest.
- ***Make sure to welcome new neighbors.*** Establish a welcoming committee that visits or calls each new resident. The Mid-County Regional Services Center has welcome packets to help you.
- ***Organize regular social functions*** to encourage a sense of community.
- ***Sponsor clean-up days,*** taking one street at a time so that the work seems manageable and can be accomplished in the morning.
- ***Create a telephone tree, listserv or other communication system.***

### Welcome Packets

Welcome packets for new County residents are available at the Mid-County Regional Services Center.

Consider distributing these packets as part of your ongoing new neighbor welcome efforts.

- ***Recognize volunteers*** by thanking each individual at a general meeting; acknowledging someone's efforts in your newsletter, or neighbors cooking dinner or cake/cookies for someone.
- ***Follow up*** on issues brought to the association for resolution.